

Lead-free alternatives: Manufacturers and retailers

Lead is a known toxin that is commonly used in fishing weights and jigs. When ingested by wildlife, it is 100% fatal. Non-lead fishing tackle is not a novelty product. Ask for it at retailers and shops, and visit these tackle web sites:

Bass Pro Shops | www.basspro-shops.com

Search their web site for "XPS" and "Excalibur" weights (tungsten), "Ultra Steel 2000," and "Sticky Weight" tungsten putty, "Lake Fork" tungsten jigs, Gremlin Green "bismuth worm sinkers," and "Safe-Sink" densified plastic worm weights.

Big Ten Tackle | www.bigtentackle.com

An online source for ceramic and steel sinkers.

BossTin | www.bosstin.com

Fishing weights made of tin, including split shot, stylers, swivel sinkers, and a variety of egg and bullet sinkers.

Bullet Weights | www.bulletweights.com

Alternative terminal tackle products. "Ultra Steel" sinkers and interchangeable jigs; tin split shot; tungsten bullet and screw-in weights.

Cabela's | www.cabelas.com

This retailer carries many brands of "non-toxic fishing weights" in their online catalog.

Conquistador Tackle Company |

www.conquistadortackle.com

The Conquest tungsten bullet slip weight is available in seven different sizes.

Double Necker Rigs | www.doublenecker.com

Fishing rig made from recycled beverage bottles. Use as a bobber or a weight.

Dr. Drop tungsten composite sinkers |

<http://drdropsinkers.com>

Tungsten composite sinkers use exclusive "friction grip" allowing for fast attachment and retrieval. New for 2006, a "click and slide" weight, as well as traditional bullet and bell sinkers in several weights.

Eagle Claw Fishing Tackle | www.eagleclawclassic.com

Colorado retailer's online catalog includes non-toxic removable split-shot made of tin, and a variety of steel sinkers (bass-casting, egg, and rubber core).

First Mate Lures, Inc. | www.firstmatelures.com

Online retailer of non-toxic tackle made from a bismuth/tin alloy. Jigs, drop shots, bottom bouncers, and slip sinkers, available in a variety of styles and sizes.

Fiskas Wolfram Jigs | www.yourbobberson.com

Tungsten jig heads in a variety of sizes, shapes, and colors. Available at many retailers throughout the U.S. and Canada; made in Sweden.

Flambeau Outdoors |

www.flambeauoutdoors.com/fishing.asp

"Safe-Sink" worm weights and jig heads are made from a proprietary nontoxic plastic material with tungsten that promises the same specific gravity as lead, so the weights are the same size.

Gitzit, Inc. | www.gitzitinc.com

Lead-free "Little Tough Guy" and "Micro Little Tough Guy" jig heads.

Green Tackle | www.greentackle.com

Manufactures unpainted round jig heads and pyramid sinkers made from a bismuth-tin alloy; many sizes offered. Green Tackle is also an online retailer of "environmentally friendly" tackle, including lead-free and biodegradable options.

Hookem Lures | www.hookemlures.com

Each Hookem lure uses glass as its weight. These lures are basically jig heads: durable, nontoxic, and offered in a range of colors and sizes.

Jackfish Lures | www.jackfishlures.com

Jigs and sinkers made of bismuth.

JC Manufacturing | www.planer-board.com

Cast-iron downrigger weights in 4, 6, 8, and 10-pound sizes. The torpedo-style weights are covered with a soft plastic which makes them easy on your boat.

Keitech | <http://keitech.co.jp/english/>

Tungsten-composite bass jigs and round head jigs.

Lead Free Jig Heads | www.leadfreejigheads.com

Online retailer of tin/bismuth alloy sinkers and jigs in a variety of styles.

Lindy Fishing Tackle | www.lindyfishingtackle.com

The Techni-Glo Rattl'n Flyer Spoon is made from a tin/pewter alloy with a brass rattle. Eco-Safe E-Z Tube Weights are made of a tin/pewter alloy, and available in four weight sizes, with and without rattles.

Loon Outdoors | www.loonoutdoors.com/sinkets.html

The "Deep Soft Weight" (1 oz.) is made from tungsten.

Lucky Strike Bait Works Ltd. |

www.luckystrikebaitworks.com

Jigs, jig heads, sinkers, and split-shot made from nontoxic bismuth and tin.

Northland Fishing Tackle | www.northlandtackle.com

The "Nature Jig" is 100% lead free, cast from a nontoxic bismuth/tin alloy.

Pallatrax USA | <http://pallatraxusa.com>

Weights in the Stonze System are made from naturally occurring stones. Available in a range of sizes and colors, in swivel and in-line versions.

Panther Martin | www.panthermartin.com

"Big Belly" spinners are made from stainless steel and come in a number of sizes.

Penetrater Weights | www.penetraterweights.com

Tungsten steel bullet-style worm weights available in a variety of colors.

PJ's Finesse Baits | www.ejigs.com

Non-toxic tackle made from bismuth: Maribou jigs, Barbless Woolly Buggers, Eggboos, and Wormaboos.

Recycled Fish | www.recycledfish.org/safe-angling/safe-angling-kits.htm

All new for 2009! The SAFE Angling Kit has everything you need to catch fish, and do so as a steward of lakes and streams. Packed with name-brand gear--non-lead

(**Recycled Fish Cont.**) weights, biodegradable molded lures, circle and cam-action hooks--these kits are ready to go. Great for the novice or a seasoned angler making the switch to non-toxic weights and baits. Visit the web site for participating retail locations.

River2Sea | www.river2seausa.com

California-based manufacturer of non-toxic tungsten sinkers and bismuth/tin alloy buzzbaits and spinnerbaits.

Rocky Ledge Bass Tackle | www.rockyledge.com

Spinnerbaits, buzzbaits, and jigs made from pewter.

Rocky Brook Sinkers | www.rockybrooksinkers.com

Fishing weights made from limestone. Weights from 1/10 oz. to 1/2 oz. Same weight as lead, but not as dense.

Salamander Sinkers | www.salamandersinkers.com

Steel sinkers with a new, patent-pending design for terminal tackle. Nontoxic, snag-resistant, and weight-adjustable.

South Bend | www.south-bend.com

Eco Weights are made from highly pressurized iron oxide, and come in many weights and styles: worm weights, egg sinkers, and bank sinkers. Also makes steel removable split-shot sinkers.

Tacklesmith | www.tacklesmith.com

Wisconsin-based online retailer of lead-free sinkers and jigs made from a variety of non-toxic metals.

The Gapen Company | www.gapen.com

Minnesota manufacturer sells some tin jigs, including the Crappie Vixen and The Jerk.

XCalibur Baits | www.xcaliburtackle.com

XCalibur Tungsten fishing weights in bullet, barrel, and drop-shot versions.

Yakima Bait Co. | www.yakimabait.com

The Hildebrandt® product line includes many spinnerbaits made from molded bismuth or tin.

For more information about LoonWatch, contact the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute at 1411 Ellis Avenue, Ashland, WI 54806, 715-682-1220, or visit our website at <http://www.northland.edu/loonwatch>